



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2004

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
U.S. Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-3300

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We, the undersigned members of Congress, continue to be very concerned that the BRAC 2005 draft selection criteria are out of balance in that it focuses exclusively on near-term war-fighting readiness and training and does not address either future military technology capabilities or the unpredictability of 21st century military challenges we may have to confront. Currently, the U.S. Defense Department maintains an impressive research, development and testing infrastructure at various sites across the country, all aimed at conceiving, developing, and testing military technology capabilities for an uncertain future. Our recent military successes in Iraq and Afghanistan, in particular, would have been impossible without the many contributions made by the defense laboratories and testing facilities to equip our war-fighters to navigate the 21st century battlefield and prevail against our enemies. These research and development missions of these centers, and their unique capabilities should receive explicitly equal weight in the draft selection criteria now under development. They are notably absent in the draft.

Accordingly, we strongly urge that another criterion recognizing the value and capabilities of military research and development laboratories and testing centers, as well as their specialized professional talent and technical infrastructure be added to the BRAC 2005 draft selection criteria.

The existing military R&D laboratories and test centers create new technology, serve as smart buyers for the acquisition offices of different branches of the armed services, test and evaluate technologies, shepherd new technologies toward the field, and directly serve an unbiased role in translating military needs into technical concepts. Largely, they also work very closely with industrial partners on-site and off. In most cases, they are hubs of technology business innovation and development and, as such, they contribute substantially to regional and national economic growth and prosperity.

Not having such defense capabilities within the Defense Department structure would deprive the U.S. of an unbiased technical advisory capability and would seriously risk

relegating future research to areas that only appear to have near-term commercial value. We see a balance and partnership between military technology centers and industry technical capability as defining the most prudent course ahead. Further, there is great risk that many commercial centers with nearby defense R&D laboratories could wither as an unintended consequence of short-sighted closure of such labs. Technology transfer would suffer, and these proven economic engines so critical for a technology-based military and the spin-off benefits to many civilian sectors of the American economy would be jeopardized.

We reiterate our view that another criterion recognizing the value and capabilities of military research and development laboratories and testing centers, as well as their unique professional talent and technical infrastructure be added to the BRAC 2005 criteria selection before they are made final.

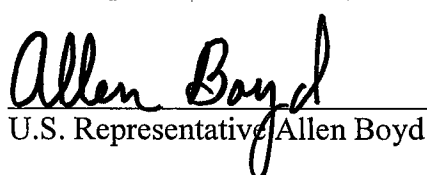
Sincerely yours,


U.S. Representative Frank Pallone

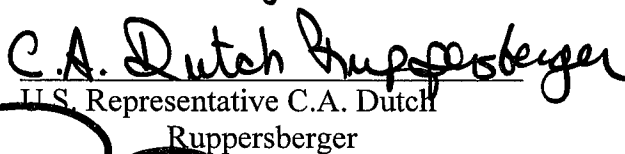

U.S. Representative Rush Holt


U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen


U.S. Representative Christopher Smith

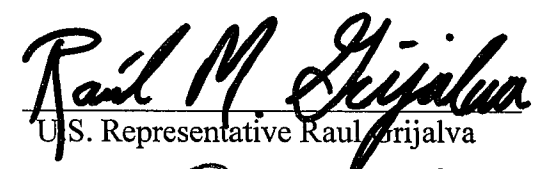

U.S. Representative Allen Boyd


U.S. Representative Steven Pearce


U.S. Representative C.A. Dutch
Ruppersberger


U.S. Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton


U.S. Representative Rob Simmons

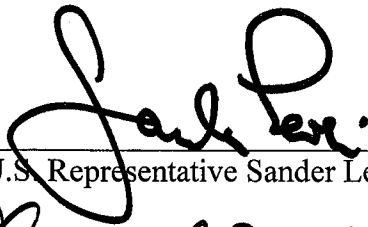

U.S. Representative Raul Grijalva

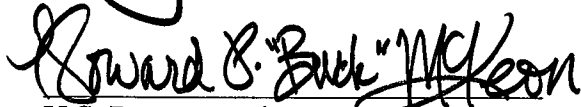

U.S. Representative Michael McNulty


U.S. Representative Jo Ann Davis

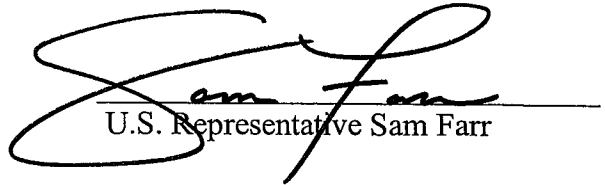

U.S. Representative James Langevin


U.S. Representative Patrick Kennedy


U.S. Representative Sander Levin


U.S. Representative Howard P.
McKeon


U.S. Representative Ken Calvert


U.S. Representative Sam Farr

Cc: Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment
Attention: Mr. Peter Potochney, Director, Base Realignment and Closure
Room 3D814
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-3300